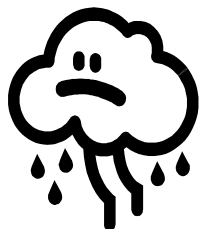


Department of Human Services

Prepared by the
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Articles in Today's Clips Friday, April 27, 2007

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ClickOnDetroit.com

Breaking News: Car Stolen With Children Inside

POSTED: 8:58 am EDT April 27, 2007

UPDATED: 9:27 am EDT April 27, 2007

DETROIT -- Detroit police are searching for a silver Ford Focus that was stolen from the city's west side Friday morning.

A woman was preparing to take her two children to school, when she went back inside her home to get her daughter's school bag. She left the children inside the Ford Focus with the keys and a man she knows, according to police.

When the woman came back outside, her car and the children were gone.

The driver of the car was last seen driving westbound on Pembroke from Asbury Park.

Police said the children are 3 and 5 years old.

The car has a temporary paper license plate in the back window.

It is unclear what the relationship between the man and woman are.

Police ask anyone with information to contact them immediately.

Stay with Local 4 News and ClickOnDetroit.com for the latest developments.

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ClickOnDetroit.com

Breaking News: Stolen Car Found; Children Remain Missing

POSTED: 8:58 am EDT April 27, 2007

UPDATED: 10:17 am EDT April 27, 2007

DETROIT -- Detroit police said they found the stolen silver Ford Focus that was taken from the city's west side Friday morning.

The car was found near Palmer Park in Detroit. Police said the 26-year-old man, whose name has not been released, took the car with two children inside.

The mother of the children, a 5-year-old girl and a 3-year-old boy, was preparing to take her daughter to school, when she went back inside her home to get the girl's school bag.

She left the children inside the car with the man, who police said she had only known a few weeks.

When the woman went inside the home, the man crossed over to the driver's seat and drove off, according to police.

When the woman returned, the car was gone with her children still inside, police said.

Police began to search for the stolen car and found it near Palmer Park, but the man who was driving and the woman's children remain missing.

The boy was wearing gold, red and blue pajamas and the girl was wearing a school uniform.

Police ask anyone with information to contact them immediately.

An investigation is under way.

Stay with Local 4 News and ClickOnDetroit.com for the latest developments on this breaking news story.

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ClickOnDetroit.com

Missing Children Found Inside Home; Mother In Custody

POSTED: 8:58 am EDT April 27, 2007
UPDATED: 11:07 am EDT April 27, 2007

DETROIT -- The children who a mother and police believed to be inside a stolen car were actually asleep inside the woman's home.

Detroit police said the children, ages 3 and 5 years old, were still inside their home on Friday morning when a man the mother had known a few weeks drove away in her silver Ford Focus.

The woman told police her two children were inside the stolen car, and a search for the vehicle and a manhunt was under way.

A short time after the investigation began, police said they found the car abandoned near Palmer Park with nobody inside.

Just moments after police recovered the car, they said the woman's children were never in the car in the first place and were actually asleep inside the woman's home.

No details have been released, but authorities remain at the scene.

The mother of the children has been handcuffed and placed inside a Detroit police vehicle and officials said she will most likely face charges.

Stay with Local 4 News and ClickOnDetroit.com for the latest updates.

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Tara's children move to Ohio with her sister

Standerfer welcomes return to 'normalcy'

By Jameson Cook
Macomb Daily Staff Writer

Alicia Standerfer on Thursday was granted approval to move Tara and Stephen Grant's children to southern Ohio, where Standerfer lives with her husband and two children.

"This is huge news for us," Standerfer said with a sigh of relief late Thursday afternoon, as she was riding in a minivan with the children south on Interstate 75 near the Ohio border. "This is a big relief to everyone involved. We won't have to travel so much anymore. This will allow the whole family to return to some normalcy."

Michigan Department of Human Services officials informed Standerfer that social services staffers in Ohio had completed their investigation into the Standerfers' home life as part of the custody case. Alicia and Kris Standerfer have temporary guardianship pending the outcome in court.

"The home study is done and we've been approved," Standerfer said.

The Standerfers about a month ago had been granted the permission to move the children, pending the outcome of the report. She said most of the children's possessions have already been moved to their home in anticipation of a favorable ruling, allowing them to leave within a couple of hours of receiving word.

Stephen Grant's sister, Kelly Utykanski of Sterling Heights, said Thursday she had no problem with the ruling in light of the fact that the Standerfers have had the children since her brother was arrested. Utykanski and her husband, Chris, are seeking permanent custody of the children -- as are the Standerfers.

The Grant children, a 6-year-old girl and 4-year-old boy, mostly have been residing in an undisclosed home in metropolitan Detroit -- most of the time with Alicia Standerfer present - - since their mother died and father was charged with first-degree murder.

The children, who have been home schooled since their father's arrest, were allowed to spend two weekends at the Standerfer home in Chillicothe, Ohio.

Alicia Standerfer has been traveling extensively between the Detroit area, the Upper Peninsula where Tara's funeral was held, and her home in Ohio.

The Standerfers' two children aged 1 and 2 had also been living in the Detroit area until April 1, when they moved back home.

Their father, Kris Standerfer moved back after Tara's funeral one month ago today. He has returned to his job as a paper engineer and resumed his work on a master's of business administration, maintaining his targeted graduation in June, Standerfer said.

Alicia's parents, who live near the Standerfers in Ohio, have been living in the Standerfers' house when Alicia has been away.

"We've been living like nomads," she said. "It's good to get some normalcy under their (Grant children) belts. All this shuffling around hasn't been healthy."

Standerfer said the frequency in which she must leave her children for long stretches has helped her understand the challenges faced by Tara in the weeks and months before her death. Tara had been commuting between her Washington home and Puerto Rico as part of her job at Washington Group International. Her traveling had put strains on the marriage and family, and was a source of dispute between her and Stephen Grant.

The argument that resulted in Stephen Grant strangling her to death began, according to Stephen Grant's statement to police, over her plan to return to Puerto Rico earlier than planned.

"I understand how tough it was on her, because it is tough," she said. "It's tough when I have to leave my kids in Ohio, the young one is tugging on me wanting to go with me as I walk out the door.

"I love Michigan -- I grew up here -- but I would like to get my feet back on the ground where they're supposed to be."

Even though she now has four children under her care, Standerfer said she hopes at some time to return to her job as a dental hygienist, even though she only worked one day a week.

Click here to return to story:

http://www.macombdaily.com/stories/042707/loc_tara001.shtml

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Campaign to End Child Abuse

April 27, 2007 07:08 AM EDT

The Michigan State Police received a big heart-felt donation. The Children's Trust Fund donated over 700 magnetic blue ribbons to troopers. It's part of an effort to call attention to the cooperative efforts needed by law enforcement officials to prevent child abuse in our community.

Col. Peter Munoz, Michigan State Police: "It serves as raising the public's awareness, certainly that of our troopers and police officers around the state to look for signs of abuse and neglect involving our children."

April is known across Michigan as Child Abuse Prevention Month. The blue ribbons donated are a widely recognized symbol of awareness.



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Charges added

Friday, April 27, 2007

KENTWOOD -- Two more charges of criminal sexual conduct were brought Thursday against a 26-year-old Wyoming man who authorities allege has molested up to 18 boys in Allegan and Kent counties. Jamie VanKlaveren waived his probable cause hearing before District Judge William Kelly, meaning he will face felony charges in Kent County Circuit Court on two counts of second-degree criminal sexual conduct against two boys. VanKlaveren already has been charged for similar crimes in Allegan County and Wyoming. Over the past month, VanKlaveren has waived several criminal sexual conduct charges and his lawyer, Brett Stevenson, said his client is negotiating a possible plea agreement with the Kent County Prosecutor's Office. "I have to look long and hard before I can find another person in Kent County with this many victims," Assistant Prosecutor Helen Brinkman said.

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Father who raped daughter, ordered her to toss their babies down air shaft gets 35 years in prison

April 26, 2007

By JANET FRANKSTON LORIN

ASSOCIATED PRESS

JERSEY CITY, N.J. — A father who raped his teenage daughter over several years and ordered her to throw two newborns he had fathered with her down an air shaft was sentenced to 35 years in prison.

The 45-year-old West New York man pleaded guilty to aggravated manslaughter, aggravated assault and two counts of aggravated sexual assault. The Associated Press is not identifying him to protect the identity of his daughter, the victim of a sex crime.

One of the babies survived and is in foster care. The other one died after being thrown down the shaft.

"These are heinous, cruel and depraved acts committed against your own flesh and blood," said Superior Court Judge Kevin G. Callahan, who imposed the maximum sentence Wednesday.

According to prosecutors, the father threatened to kill the daughter and her mother if she did not throw the babies down the shaft. The daughter admitted throwing the babies down the shaft under her father's orders.

In a statement, crafted with the help of a cellmate, the man acknowledged his "atrocious crimes."

"I am totally repentant for my past actions and I do deserve to pay for this," the man wrote in the statement read in court by his attorney. But he also maintained that he did not throw the babies out the window.

DNA tests showed the man fathered both children — a girl, who died just after birth, and a boy, who survived — with his daughter, who is now 19.

The man told a psychologist that he didn't view the teenager as his daughter, but "as a person I'm in love with," adding, "I would not have sex with her if she had not seduced me."

Authorities said the man, an illegal immigrant from El Salvador, did not meet the girl until after she moved to the United States in 2000 as a 13-year-old. Their sexual relationship began around that time, prosecutor Mike D'Andrea said.

The daughter has pleaded guilty to reckless manslaughter and aggravated assault, and faces a maximum of seven years in prison, D'Andrea said. Her sentencing is May 10.

Her father could be deported after completing his sentence, authorities said.

At the sentencing, the man's attorney said psychological reports indicated the father has extremely low intellectual aptitude. Authorities have described the daughter as borderline mentally retarded.

E. Carl Broege, a public defender, described a statement she made to authorities that she was attracted to him, "and I began to provoke him until he finally gave in."

Her statements about their relationship later became accusatory, Broege said.

The relationship was discovered after neighbors heard a baby crying and called police in September 2005. The officers found a newborn boy at the bottom of an air shaft in their three-story apartment building.

The boy had a fractured skull but survived after landing on a pile of trash and old cigarette packages, D'Andrea said. He is now in foster care.

Further investigation turned up a mummified baby girl born in 2003, D'Andrea said.

The man lived in a small apartment with his brother, wife and two adolescent children and worked as a cook at a restaurant in Hackensack.

According to statements given to police, neither the brother nor the wife knew of the relationship or knew the girl had been pregnant.

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i-Team Investigation: DNA Daddy's Case Goes Back To Court



(TV5) -- There is new action in court that will put this case in front of a new judge and this time the father has support from several lawmakers. A sixteen year journey paying child support is once again headed back to court.

TV5 first met Douglas Richardson in November. He's a father paying child support to a son that's not biologically his. Over the years thousands of dollars have gone to the boy and his biological father. At times Richardson got behind in his payments and though the kid is now twenty Richardson is still struggling to pay what he owes.

But now Richardson has new hope he will finally be exempt from paying a kid that's not related to him. He filed a new motion in court and a new judge will consider his case this March. Richardson is hoping for ruling that will allow him to stop paying child support. One day he hopes to get some or all of his money back.

The original judge in the case that made the ruling requiring he pay child support is deceased. That judge had a reputation for being tough, and that's why Richardson is hoping a new judge will be more understanding on his behalf. It's not likely Richardson will get any money back unless he files a civil suit on fraud.

Senator Barcia and several other law makers are standing behind him. Doug will also be testifying in front of the Senate Judiciary Committee in the coming months.



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Article published Apr 26, 2007

Girl identified, three targeted in MHS threats

One girl has been identified as being involved with the bomb threats at Monroe High School and three other girls have been targeted for investigation.

Meanwhile, law enforcement and school officials have become weary of a series of threats at area schools this week and are promising swift and decisive action against those involved.

"We're going to charge every individual who is responsible," said Monroe County Prosecutor William P. Nichols. "They will be held fully accountable under the law."

Monroe Public Schools Supt. David Taylor said one girl has been suspended for her role in the bomb threats that disrupted two days of school and will face the board of education for an expulsion hearing next month.

"We have identified the perpetrators," Mr. Taylor said. "We have one for sure."

Monroe County Sheriff Tilman Crutchfield said the investigation is continuing. The four students are juveniles and are believed to be freshmen and sophomores, which would make them between 13 and 15 years old.

In a separate but similar case, police are investigating a threat at St. Mary Catholic Central High School, another in a group of threats that have plagued area schools this week.

Officials are getting tired of them. Police and Mr. Nichols said they are taking these threats seriously even if those involved think they are hoaxes.

"These hoaxes are creating huge disruptions," Mr. Taylor said. "It's just not right. We will pursue each and every one of them."

Monroe Police Detective Brett Ansel said a note was left in a room at SMCC this morning, and it basically said there was a bomb in the building. Detective Ansel said he is in the process of collecting DNA evidence from the note and it will only be a matter of time before he develops a suspect.

He then challenged the person involved to come forward and make it easier on himself or herself.

"You come to us and we'll work with you," Detective Ansel said. "Don't make us come to you."

He also is investigating another threat made at Orchard High School on Wednesday and said these incidents must stop. They are not jokes, the detective said, and he is treating them as criminal activities.

"We are not taking these lightly," Detective Ansel said.

In addition to punishment from the school, those involved face criminal charges in juvenile court if they are under the age of 17. However, the law does also allow the offender to be charged as an adult if necessary.

Mr. Nichols said anyone making a false bomb threat to a school can be charged with a felony with a punishment of up to four years in prison. In some cases, a terrorism charge is available and it carries a maximum sentence of 20 years in prison.

Mr. Nichols added that those who are involved with these acts also could be made responsible monetarily for the disruption they cause. When schools are evacuated, busses are required and police are called in to search buildings. The bills add up.

Parents also might be held liable to pay those costs associated with their children's criminal actions, Mr. Nichols said.

"We are taking this very seriously," he said. "One small act can have serious consequences."



Governor Granholm to Be Honored by National Alliance to End Homelessness

LANSING, Mich., April 26 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- The National Alliance to End Homelessness, a national nonprofit education, advocacy and capacity building organization, will honor Governor Jennifer M. Granholm with a Public Sector Achievement Award for her leadership in the effort to end homelessness in Michigan, the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) announced today.

The Award will be presented at the Alliance's Annual Awards Ceremony, which brings together leaders from Capitol Hill, the Bush Administration, business, philanthropy and the homelessness provider community to recognize the achievements of those in the private, public, and nonprofit sectors who have made significant achievements to solving one of the nation's most complex social issues. The ceremony takes place Thursday, April 26 at 7:30 p.m. at the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C.

"Ending homelessness requires adopting proven strategies that are supported by a partnership between the public, private, and nonprofit sectors of a community. Governor Granholm has shown tremendous leadership in creating an environment for change within Michigan, and serves as a role model for other governors across the nation. She has accomplished this by setting clear goals and steadfastly working towards completing them," said Nan Roman, president of the National Alliance to End Homelessness.

Governor Granholm, through Michigan's Campaign to End Homelessness, has brought together private, public, and nonprofit stakeholders to create plans to end homelessness for the over 50,000 homeless people living in communities throughout the state. Guided by the vision that housing is a right for all, the 60 community plans consist of strategies that focus on housing assistance, models for collaboration among service providers, and special programs that target underserved populations.

"We are deeply committed to the Campaign to End Homelessness in Michigan within ten years," said Michael R. DeVos, Director of the Michigan State Housing Development Authority. "Our state's effort is a mature one because we recognize that the work needs to happen at the local level. We are working, in partnership with hundreds of organizations, cities and towns across Michigan, with \$45 million in new statewide funding and an additional \$25 million for homeless veterans to ensure that this campaign is successful."

MSHDA is a quasi-state agency that provides financial and technical assistance through public and private partnerships to create and preserve safe and decent affordable housing, engage in community economic development activities, and address homeless issues. MSHDA's loans and operating expenses are financed through the sale of tax-exempt and taxable bonds and notes to private investors, not from state tax revenues. For more information on MSHDA programs and initiatives, visit the Web site at <http://www.michigan.gov/mshda>.

SOURCE Michigan State Housing Development Authority

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- <http://www.michigan.gov/mshda>



Blogs Discussing This News Release

Michigan Report

April 26, 2007

13 REGIONAL JOBLESS RATES DROP IN MARCH

Unemployment rates in 13 of Michigan's 17 major labor market areas decreased slightly in March, the Department of Labor and Economic Growth reported Thursday as it found minor changes in employment and labor force levels across the state.

Rick Waclawek, director of the Bureau of Labor Market Information and Strategic Initiatives, said trends over the past year show declines in the labor force in many areas and significant job losses in just a handful of metropolitan areas.

The average decrease in March compared to February for the 13 areas showing a drop in unemployment was .2 percentage points, with the largest declines recorded in Flint and the Niles-Benton Harbor areas at .6 percentage points and .5 percentage points respectively. Rates were higher in the Detroit-Warren-Livonia and Monroe areas and unchanged in the Ann Arbor and Jackson areas. Total employment was up slightly – an average of .2 percentage points – in 10 areas for the month.

The static job market over the past year is reflected in changes of about .5 percentage points or less as seven areas had lower unemployment rates, seven others had higher rates and three were unchanged. And in terms of employment levels, all but one of the areas showed fewer workers compared to a year ago.

The number of seasonally unadjusted payroll jobs across the state increased by 28,000 to 4,263,000 for the month, with government (up 7,000) and leisure/hospitality services (6,000) leading the way. But compared to a year ago, the number fell by 41,000, with 32,000 of those occurring in the Detroit-Warren-Livonia market.

Among industry sectors, manufacturing employment was down in all areas while health services was higher, while 16 had higher unemployment.

The new report showed unemployment rates declined in 56 of the state's 83 counties; 25 counties had unemployment rates of at least 10 percent, with the worst at 20.8 percent in Mackinac County.



Church plans soup kitchen expansion

Friday, April 27, 2007

JOE SNAPPER

THE SAGINAW NEWS

When it comes to feeding the hungry, the Old Town Christian Outreach Center is striving to make sure its reach does not exceed its grasp.

The nondenominational Saginaw church at 600 Gratiot is expanding its 9,500-square-foot chapel and office with a 4,800-square-foot dining area and kitchen, the Rev. Donald H. Dinninger told city planners Tuesday.

The new facility accommodates up to 160 people at once, or 340 in two lunchtime shifts. It replaces a roving soup kitchen that has served tens of thousands of meals out of a 14-foot tractor-trailer over the past seven years, he said.

"Now we're going to be able to give them a place where they can come inside" and serve "more nutritious meals," said Dinninger, also the Saginaw Police Department chaplain.

Construction will cost between a quarter and a half-million dollars and wrap up by summer's end, said Bob Bishop of Cornerstone Fabricating, the project manager.

Planning Commission members approved the site plan unanimously.

In their recommendation for approval, city staffers said the ministry has, during the past decade, bought up the entire northwest block at Lyon and South Michigan and cemented itself as a community "asset."

The kitchen will offer meals seven days a week from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. The ministry prohibits loitering and sleeping at the property. The congregation of 400 will worship Sundays, city staffers said.

"The business owners in the area have nothing but praise for what you've done for the neighborhood," Planning Commissioner and City Councilman Larry Coulouris told Dinninger.

Dinninger and his wife, Bonnie, transformed a hardware store into a church in 1996. Its ministry also arranges to provide free clothes, groceries and health services to those in need.

Joe Snapper is a staff writer for The Saginaw News. You may reach him at 776-9715.

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High times in tanning shed

Drug pipes, Playboys found with tanning bed in maintenance building

By PATRICK SULLIVAN
psullivan@record-eagle.com

04/27/2007

BEULAH — Stacks of Playboy magazines. Rolling papers and a large stash of drug pipes that contained traces of marijuana. Straws flecked with cocaine.

Custodians created a vice-laden clubhouse in a maintenance building at Benzie County's government center, a structure that also housed a tanning bed.

One janitor recently pleaded guilty to stealing electricity from the county to power the tanning bed he frequently used. The county's maintenance coordinator died in an alcohol-fueled, December car crash before charges could be brought against him.

Police attempted to find the source of some of the bizarre and illegal contents of the janitors' room, and some of the marijuana pipes have been traced back to the evidence room at the Benzie County Sheriff's Department.

Authorities, however, contend the pipes were not stolen from the evidence room and officials don't believe any of the marijuana or cocaine came from the sheriff's department, Undersheriff Rory Heckman said.



Special to the Record-Eagle

A stack of Playboy magazines fill a drawer in the maintenance building at Benzie County's government center.

Heckman said some of the marijuana pipes found in the janitors' room came from the evidence room, but first had been discarded according to department policy. He said janitor Alan Ernest Blattner, 56, likely alerted his supervisor, Donald Zaleski, 55, about their whereabouts.

Blattner pleaded guilty to misdemeanor theft for pilfering electricity for the tanning bed, while Zaleski died in a car crash near Frankfort in December.

"I think they got thrown in the trash and they thought they were gone and someone fished through the trash and found them," Heckman said. "Al says he never gave it to him and Don says, 'Well, he never gave it to me, but he may have told me it was in the trash.'"

Investigators have not alleged that Blattner was in possession of drug paraphernalia, but such possession is not a crime in Michigan, Heckman said. Blattner passed a drug test.

The case could lead to changes in the way the sheriff's department disposes of contraband. Heckman said the drug pipes should not merely have been thrown away. In the future, such items will be smashed with a sledgehammer before they are discarded.

Heckman said he doesn't believe traces of marijuana and cocaine found in the pole building could have come from the department's evidence room because drugs are incinerated in the presence of two officers and the destruction is documented in paperwork.

Heckman said access to the evidence room is limited and an audit was conducted as a result of this case that turned up nothing suspicious. Items are deposited into the evidence room through a two-way locker and not all officers are authorized to go into the room.

"I don't even walk in there; I make a habit to not walk into any evidence rooms," Heckman said.

Zaleski admitted he brought the cocaine paraphernalia to work but denied using it, saying it had been 15 or 20 years since he had used cocaine, according to a police report.

The stack of Playboy magazines found their way into the clubhouse after Blattner brought them to the government center to give to Zaleski, he told investigators, according

to a police report. He told police his father gave him the magazines and he passed them on after he finished reading them.

Heckman said the decision to allow Blattner, a union employee, to remain on the job rested with Benzie County Administrator Chuck Clarke. Clarke previously said Blattner was allowed to keep his job because the offense was minor and Blattner demonstrated bad judgment.

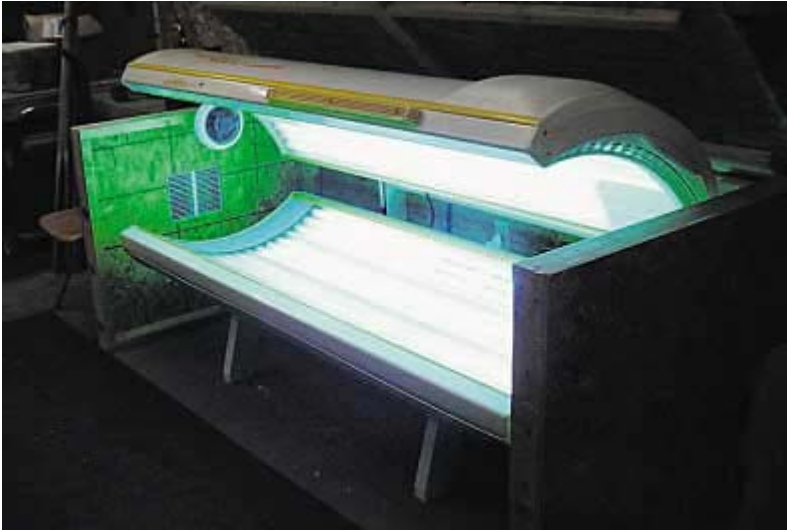
Zaleski also was a central figure in a criminal investigation involving Elaine Lucille Saffron, 49, a state Department of Human Services worker accused of stealing state property.

She faces a pair of theft-related misdemeanors, though prosecutors said an investigation continues into possible additional crimes.



Special to the Record-Eagle

Drug pipes, rolling paper, a lighter and scale were among paraphernalia found in a Benzie County maintenance building that also housed a tanning bed.



Record-Eagle/Douglas Tesner

A tanning bed in a county maintenance building was turned on for this photograph taken during a Benzie County Sheriff's Department investigation. This photograph and others were taken by the Benzie County Sheriff's Department and obtained through a Freedom of Information Act request filed by Benzie County resident Eric VanDussen.